



FRIENDS , SUSAN SOMMERS CO-WINNERS OF SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

The Friends of Edgewood and Susan Sommers



Susan Sommers and Peter Ingram show off awards

were co-winners of the third annual San Mateo County Sustainability Award for 2001.

This award, given by

Sustainable San Mateo County, is presented to individuals or organizations that promote sustainability in our County, as evidenced by actions addressing healthy ecosystems, economic vitality, and social equity. Other winners this year were Evelyn Taylor, Coyote Point Museum for Environmental Education, Mid-Peninsula Boys and Girls Club, and Peninsula Habitat for Humanity.



The Friends of Edgewood were recognized for our dedication to protecting the native habitat at Edgewood for the past eight years, our docent program, habitat restoration program, community outreach, and trail patrol programs.

At the awards ceremony at the Westin San Francisco Airport Hotel, the Friends organization was presented with 4 additional congratulatory certificates signed by State Assemblyman Louis J. Papan, State Senator Jackie Speier, County Supervisors Mike Nevin, Mark Church, Jerry Hill, Rich Gordon, and Rose Jacobs Gibson, and U.S. Congressmen Tom Lantos and Anna Eshoo.

COOPER'S HAWK

By Lee Franks

The Cooper's Hawk, *Accipiter cooperii*, a crow-sized (avg. length, 14"-20", wing span, 29"-37") woodland raptor, is a secretive, inconspicuous species. Generally, this bird inhabits deep woods, utilizing thick cover for both hunting and nesting. It has short, powerful, rounded wings and a relatively long tail that ensures maneuverability in dense woodland areas. It is superbly adapted for quick pursuit of woodland birds and mammals capturing a variety of prey, but mainly jays, robins, and squirrels.

They are considered residents within California, but migrants from the north substantially increase the population during the winter months. Also, birds from the northern reaches of the state drift southward, joining the migratory flow and increase the fall populations in central and southern California. Fall migration occurs from mid-September to mid-October. Spring migration is protracted and widespread.

Appearance

Female Cooper's are about one-third larger than males. As adults, both sexes are similar in plumage, but males, on average, are more brightly colored. The upper parts of the male are a dark bluish-gray, whereas, on the female they are brownish without the bluish cast. The under

(Continued on page 4)

INSIDE THE EXPLORER

A Closer Look at Royal Larkspur.....	2
Adopt-A-Highway Update	2
President's Message.....	3
New Docent Training for 2002.....	3
Ranger Roundup	4
Annual Meeting and BBQ.....	7
Membership Dues	7
Upcoming Events	8

A CLOSER LOOK AT ROYAL LARKSPUR

By Bob Young

This is the seventeenth of a series of articles describing the flowers pictured in our wildflower brochure. —ed.



Photo by Sonja Wilcomer

Royal Larkspur, *Delphinium variegatum*, is shown in the brochure “Common Native Wildflowers of Edgewood” published jointly by the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the California Native Plant Society and Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve.

Just below the four petals of the Larkspur flower is a whorl of five sepals that have the same color as the petals. The peculiar shape of the upper sepal resembles the shape of a dolphin as pictured in decorative art. The genus name *Delphinium* comes from the Greek word for dolphin. The shape of that sepal also suggests the spur of a bird, hence the reference to the Larkspur. The early Spanish-Californians called it *espuela del caballero* – the cavalier’s spur.

Royal Larkspur is in the Buttercup (*Ranunculaceae*) Family. It is a perennial, growing from 1-2 feet tall, whose root bakes in the hot, dry grassland all summer, waiting for the cool, wet winter to start its new season’s growth.

The color of the Royal Larkspur on Edgewood is usually a deep royal purple. With color variations described in some wildflower books as “...upper petals white or yellowish, often tipped with purple; lower petals violet or rarely white...,” one can see why the specific epithet of this plant is *variegatum*.

It can be found between 65 and 2600 feet elevation, from California’s North Coast to the South Coast Ranges, as well as the Cascade Ranges, the Sierra Nevada foothills, and the Central Valley. On Edgewood, it blooms from March to May in the grasslands.

Three other Larkspurs on Edgewood are the Western Larkspur, which blooms a little later than the Royal; the California Larkspur which is three or more feet tall, and the Spreading Larkspur, the latter two blooming on shady, moist slopes.

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY UPDATE

By Ken Seydel

Saturday October 6th was our bimonthly cleaning of the freeway adjacent to Edgewood. Nine of our regular volunteers were joined by new trash warrior Brian Cole. Thank you Brian Cole, Sarah Divine, Carolyn Dorsch, Katherine Greene, Billy James, Bill and Kathy Korbholz, Margaret Marshall, Susan Russell, and Ken Seydel.

The freeway was unusually dirty this time and we set a record of 32 bags. Most of the trash was small, so we also set a record for time spent. Usually we are finished by 11:00 or 11:30. This time we worked until 12:30.

As always we found money (25 cents!) and at least one hubcap (VW). Also of interest was a Leatherman Utility Tool, a very large snake skin, bungee cord, combination wrench, playing cards (2 aces, 1 queen, 1 seven and 2 fives – not a very good hand), and one piece of a jigsaw puzzle (someone will be very frustrated).

If you have an interest in joining our great group please see Upcoming Events on page 8.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Peter Ingram

In the wake of September 11, 2001, we've heard ourselves and others say, "the World has changed," and we often add what that means to our families, communities and institutions. I've been wondering what it means to Edgewood. What would the spirit of the place have to say about terrorism's new place in our lives? What worries and fears would Edgewood experience?

Here's my speculation: On one level, Edgewood would look back on its multi-million year life and simply shrug. The spirit would remember virtually all of the recorded history of the human race; the incredible pain, suffering, calamity and heroism that each era entailed, and conclude that to be human is to live in continuous tension between evil and good.

On another level, Edgewood will be fearful of what the humans might do this time to degrade the environment in the name of security or national interests. And on a different level, Edgewood may feel an increased hope that the current humans who visit her will be better nurtured by her and she, in turn, more appreciated by them. She may hope that they will find new affirmation in the meaning in their stewardship work, and that the community around her will be inspired anew to preserve and protect Edgewood.

In December 2000 I was invited to make a presentation to the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Commission, for the purpose of sharing who the Friends are and what it is we do. It was a good opportunity to do a thorough report on our challenges, activities and accomplishments. The presentation was structured into two elements of stewardship: Preserve (via education and management) and Protect (acting against threats) Edgewood. The Commission seemed genuinely impressed with the range of activities going on in Edgewood and with the many volunteer opportunities available. They commended the Friends for their efforts and results and especially for the collaborative

NEW DOCENT TRAINING FOR 2002

By Dianne Hunt

I'd like to welcome our seven new Docent Trainees for the 2002 Wildflower Walk Season:

- Allyn Ashmore
- Joanne Chou
- Dee Eduardo
- Susan Engle
- Rich Gooch
- Toni Gooch
- Barry Slater
- Ranger Susy Boyd

Many thanks to the following Docents who are volunteering with our many aspects of the Docent Program:

- Julie Foster is our new Assistant Docent Coordinator in charge of the Training.
- Malini Kaushik is our new Assistant Docent Coordinator in charge of the 2002 Walks.
- Victoria Nilson will be in charge of the Docent Box and sign-in sheets.
- Katherine Greene will be doing our advertising and public relations.
- Bob Young and Pat Oren will continue to keep the Demo Garden in the Day Camp looking wonderful.
- Thanks to Elly Hess for helping with phoning.
- Kay and Les Filler are coordinating the monthly rotation of materials in the Kiosks.
- Thanks to Kathryn Strachota and Susan Peterson for putting the Docent Training Manuals together.
- Thanks to Susan Sommers, John Allen and Julie Foster for great training presentations and walks in October and November. Ken Himes will be doing our January training.

The Currant in the Demo Garden is already blooming! Please let me know what else you see out there and I'll pass the word on to our Docents! Have a wonderful holiday season! `

relationships between the Parks and Recreation staff and the Friends. We were urged to continue our fine work and to ask them for help as future challenges emerge. A subsequent staff report indicated that Edgewood benefited from 6,900

(Continued on page 6)

RANGER ROUNDUP

By Ricardo Trejo



Once again we are approaching the end of another year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers that have contributed

their time and efforts in the various programs and projects (i.e. docent walks, trail patrol, habitat and trail restoration) at Edgewood. Since 1999 Edgewood Park and Preserve staff has been selecting and recognizing individuals or group volunteers and have presented them with a recognition plaque. At the November 2001 San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, I was given the opportunity of awarding appreciation plaques to two volunteers:

- Lee Franks, Sequoia Audubon Society, for his contribution to the Bird Monitoring Program and docent lead walks.
- Matt Leddy, Professor of San Mateo College, for growing and nurturing native plants used in our re-vegetation program, donating two greenhouse tables to Edgewood, and assisting in restoration of two erosion sites.

Their names have also been added to our Edgewood Park and Preserve Volunteer Recognition Plaque. They, along with past recipients, will be remembered for many years to come.

(Continued from page 1)

parts of the male are a reddish brown barring and on the female the barring is brownish without the reddish cast. Both sexes have a dark blackish-blue gray crown with cinnamon tips on the forehead, however the coloration on the male is more pronounced. Their eyes are red.

Cooper's wear juvenile plumage for about a year, from the time they leave the nest until the

following summer. Juveniles differ from adults in having dark brown upper parts and pale buff under parts. Their breast is narrowly and sharply striped with blackish-brown on a white background. Their eyes are yellow.

The best field mark to use with this bird is the dark bluish-gray crown, as it contrasts nicely with a much lighter colored nape and upper back. Also, their tail feathers have four straight alternating bands of dark and light brown, along with a rather wide white stripe at the tip.

Breeding

The breeding season begins in late March to April and extends through May and June. The male selects the nest site and does most of the nest building. They prefer to nest in extensive forest areas with trees at least 50-60 feet tall, rather than in isolated trees. Typically, the nest is built of sticks with a "cup" that is lined with bark flakes, and is placed in a main crotch or on a horizontal limb against the trunk. Males vigorously defend an area approximately 100 ft. in diameter around the nest site, although they may forage up to 2 miles away. Individuals occasionally use the same nest in successive years, but typically build a new nest in the area.

Only one brood is raised each year. The normal clutch size is 4-5 eggs. Egg laying occurs at 2 or 3 day intervals, usually in the morning. Incubation begins after the third egg is laid, and continues for 34-36 days. Most day time and all night time incubating is done by the female.

Hatchlings, weighing about 0.1 ounces and measuring 4 inches in length, are completely covered with white natal down. The female begins brooding immediately after hatching, ending when the young are 14 days old. The hatchlings growth is slow for the first 3 days, then rapid until day 23-24. They are fed directly by the female until they are about 20 days old and able to dismember prey. The male delivers prey to the female at a nearby perch and she brings food to the nest. If the female is absent, the male delivers to the nest but does not feed the

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

young. The young lose their natal down and acquire juvenile feathering at 30 days, and depart the nest. After leaving the nest they can range 150-300 yards from the nest, but they return for prey deliveries and roosting for at least 10 days. The parents continue to bring food to the nesting area until the young are 8 weeks old and have learned to forage on their own

A pair of Cooper's nested in Edgewood this year in a 70-foot-high tree, approximately 60 feet off the Sylvan Loop Exercise Trail. The tree is located 35 paces downhill from the 0.5 mile marker at a bearing of 28 degrees. The nest was built in late March and egg laying began early in the second week of April. Over the course of 10-12 days four eggs were laid. The male made repeated use of a certain tree off the Ridgeview Loop Trail, approximately 1.5 miles away, as a perch for placing prey (birds such as jays and flickers) for delivery to the nest site. The eggs hatched and the four young successfully fledged around June 24-25. They continued to return to the nest site until the end of July. The last observation of this family was made on August 16, when one of the young was caught in the act of hunting Stellar's Jays unsuccessfully in the Day Camp area. Hopefully we will see the parents raise young in our Park again next year.

Behavior

Feeding. The term "hawk-eyed" accurately describes this bird. It can distinguish prey at something like 2 or 3 times the distance that we can detect the same creature. They have relatively large eyes. Evolution has arranged the structure of their eyes so that each eye functions very much like a telescope. The eye has a somewhat flattened lens placed rather far from the retina, giving it a long focal length which produces a large image.

Typically the bird relies on concealment and uses a series of brief perch-and-scan episodes to

locate prey, but also flies close to the ground, using bushes to shield its approach. A sudden burst of speed is the usual pursuit when hunting from a perch. Occasionally it pursues prey on foot. Cooper's that have been used for falconry employ an "attack and strike" strategy which involves ceasing wing flapping about 10 feet from the prey, and about 4 feet from contact begin swinging the legs forward. At contact, the

hawk sets its wings in a breaking position, seizing the prey with both feet. The hawk responds to movement of the captured prey by strongly grasping it, then relaxing grip, and then clamping down again. If near water, it will drown its prey, holding it under water until it ceases to move.



Female parent of Edgewood pair. Photo by George Raiche, www.digibird.com

Sounds. Vocalizations are probably the primary means of communication, because pairs restrict their activities to relatively dense woodland vegetation where visual contact is limited. They are silent much of the year, but fairly vocal during breeding season. The female has a large repertoire of calls (short, simple vocalizations differing from songs), which is attributed to a

greater need to convey more information, as they apparently control male-female interactions.

Flight. The usual flight behavior is several rapid wingbeats alternated with brief glides, actively using its tail for maneuvering, but much faster and more maneuverable when attacking prey. Cooper's often fly close to the ground or below tree canopy when hunting or approaching/ departing the nest, but may carry prey at altitudes of 300-400 feet. The bird will soar frequently. Flying birds use both legs to tuck prey to their belly, as they are often mobbed by smaller birds.

Sociality. Outside of the breeding season, the hawk is solitary. The sexes roost apart in the pre-incubation stage of nesting. The birds are monogamous, and some pairs re-mate while others are known to have new mates in

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

subsequent years. The male leaves the nesting area to hunt for himself and his mate, but nevertheless remains near the nest and the female about 80% of the day in a guarding mode.

Mortality. Mortality is quite high during the bird's first winter, approaching 78% as opposed to only 34% per year for adults 2-8 years old. The maximum reported age of a Cooper's is 12 years. Predation is probably the most widespread cause of death. The principal predators are other raptors and the Great Horned Owl.



Female (left) and male prior to release at Edgewood

Juvenile birds are also prone to injury during their first year. On October 6, 2001, Wildlife Rescue, Inc. personnel released two Cooper's back into the wild using Edgewood Park and Preserve. Both birds, a second-year male and a hatch-year female sustained concussions as a result of flying into windows. The female was in rehab for 2 months, and the male 18 months. During that time Wildlife Rescue, Inc. provided medical and support care in order to give these birds a second chance at surviving in the wild. Their personnel go to great lengths during rehab to reduce the chances of taming or habituating them with too much human interaction.

The October 6 release was only partially successful in that the male, who was in captivity

the longest, flew into another house window in Redwood City on October 11. When he re-entered rehab his weight was down 10 grams (5%) from his release weight. Probably because he had spent 18 months in captivity where he was not exposed to live food, his hunting skills deteriorated. For this reason, Wildlife Rescue, Inc. decided to place him with a falconer to see if he can be given hunting training with supportive care. Hopefully he can one day again be released into the wild and make a contribution to the survival of his species.

References: The Birds of North America, R.N. Rosenfield and J. Bielefeldt: The Birders Handbook, P.R. Ehrlich, D.S. Dobkin, D. Wheye.

(Continued from page 3)

volunteer hours in 2000 – 30% of all volunteer work across the entire County park system!

Indeed, we have continued our work and 2001 has been another full year in Edgewood. As we acknowledge the 8 years since the Friends of Edgewood came into existence, there are many critical projects under way and several meaningful milestones realized. Highlights:

- Roger Myers decided to move to Montana, but not before we bestowed him with the 2001 "Best Friend" award. We will miss him and his commitment to Edgewood.
- The Edgewood Weed Management Program is now in its third year of operation, and it has been quite successful in the war against Yellow-star thistle again this year. We're on pace to match the 2000+ hours of weeding that we accomplished in 2000.
- One of the important things we do as an organization is build on – and celebrate – past efforts and successes. So, in 2001, Elly Hess was honored by the Friends for her pioneering work in weed control, and a small section in the northwestern corner of Edgewood will be known informally to all future weeders as "Elly's Meadow".
- The Friends were an active player in the formation of the San Mateo County Weed Management Area. Edgewood was the first

(Continued on page 7)

8TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND MEMBERS APPRECIATION BBQ

The Friends of Edgewood celebrated their 8th year of existence by hosting a member's appreciation BBQ as part of the annual general meeting on October 21st. Among the special guests were Parks Director Mary Burns, Superintendent Dave Moore, Senior Planner Sam Herzberg, Volunteer Coordinator Nick Ramirez, Commissioner P.T. Mammen, Parks Foundation Executive Director Julia Bott and Board Member Bill Korbholz, and former Parks Commissioner Nita Spangler.

After all had enjoyed the BBQ, President Peter Ingram conducted the annual election for 3 new Board members to serve 2-year terms, and John Allen, Katherine Greene, and Kathy Korbholz were elected. Roger Myers returned from his new Montana home to receive his previously announced Best Friend award from Peter (see article in June 2001 *Explorer*).

(Continued from page 6)

recipient of state grant funds - \$6,000 was received and used to expand the annual control mowing from 5 acres to 12 acres.

- Susan Sommers and The Friends were one of five recipients of the "Sustainable San Mateo County" award (see page 1 of this issue).
- The Docent Program had a successful year, utilizing 60 active docents to lead 52 walks with over 500 participants.
- The Schools Outreach Program has engaged a few schools in some rewarding experiments involving in-class learning and Preserve walks. We think that 2002 will be a pivotal year, as we work to establish an Edgewood-specific curriculum and new partnerships in the educational community.
- The proposed Edgewood Interpretive Center is now a funded County project, thanks in part to the generous donations last winter from our membership. Of the \$15,000 raised to begin the planning phase of the project,

(Continued on page 8)



MEMBERSHIP DUES

New or renewing members may clip and complete this section to pay **tax-deductible** annual membership dues. Please send your check payable to **Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve** to the return address on the back of this panel. Renewing members can determine their membership expiration date by checking the four-digit code to the right of their name on their mailing label. For example, if the code is 06/2001, membership runs through June 2001.

Questions, call Bob Young.

Name

Address

City State Zip

Home Telephone Work Telephone

- o \$15 Basic Membership (includes newsletter)
- o \$25 Family Membership (newsletter)
- o \$7 Student/Retired Membership (newsletter)
- o \$50 Supporting Membership (newsletter, *Edgewood Checklist of Plants*, and Edgewood photo greeting cards (boxed set))
- o \$100 Benefactor Membership (newsletter, *Checklist*, greeting cards, and 28-minute video *Saving Edgewood Park*)
- o \$250 Patron Membership (newsletter, *Edgewood Checklist of Plants*, greeting cards, video, and 16x20 photo-poster)
- o I am enclosing a gift of _____.
- o Please send _____ copies of the 28-minute video *Saving Edgewood Park* at \$15 each.
- o Please send _____ copies of the *Edgewood Checklist of Plants* at \$3 each.

I would like to participate in the following:

- o Docent program
- o Weed management
- o Trail patrol
- o School outreach
- o Publications
- o Habitat restoration



UPCOMING EVENTS

o *Last Sunday of Every Month, SUNDAY BIRD WALK.* Meet Audubon Society docent Lee Franks at the Day Camp kiosk at 8:00 a.m.

o *Saturday, February 2nd, ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY CLEANUP DAY.* Meet at the Park & Ride at 8:30 a.m. Call Ken Seydel for more information or to arrange for safety training and to get your very own trash Picker.

o *Tuesday, January 1st, NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION.* Why not resolve to get involved in one of the volunteer opportunities sponsored by the Friends of Edgewood and give something back to this wonderful Preserve?

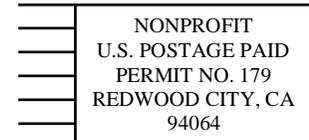
\$6,800 came from the Friends. A consulting firm will begin their work early in 2002.

- Beginning in July, the County's budget now includes funds for a third full-time ranger at Edgewood. Susy Boyd joined Ricardo Trejo and Ric Munds in August. Her presence in Edgewood is the culmination of several years of advocacy by the Friends and other parks support groups to increase staffing in the County's sensitive facilities.

As we look to 2002, the answer to your question, "What can I do?" is: Continue your generous financial support to this California Benefit Corporation; keep your awareness of Edgewood activities up (via the *Explorer* and our web site); and – get involved! We need a few of your hours to help sustain this fine organization, so that the spirit of Edgewood remains hopeful.

The Edgewood Explorer is published four times yearly by the Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving Edgewood for the human, plant, and animal generations to come. The newsletter is produced by Kathy and Bill Korbholz with assistance from Laverne Rabinowitz and contributions from many Friends. For more information about the Friends of Edgewood, visit our web site at www.friendsofedgeswood.org, mail us at PO Box 3422, Redwood City, CA 94064-3422, call or fax toll-free at (866) GO-EDGEWOOD, or email info@friendsofedgeswood.org.

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www.friendsofedgeswood.org.